



EAT, BREATHE, LIVE

// BY RUTHANNE JOHNSON

GROWING UP, Chad Sarno loved helping his mother and Italian grandmother in the kitchen, and he worked his way from dishwasher to sous chef in his brother's restaurant. But Sarno also suffered from

debilitating asthma. In his teens, he learned about the connection between the disease and dairy consumption and stopped eating milk products. In just six months, his asthma disappeared.

The more Sarno dug into the connection between diet and health, the more he felt compelled to follow a different culinary path—promoting health and compassion to animals through plant-based eating. “I followed my heart,” he says, “and what I believe in.”

Before long, his talents as a plant-based raw foods chef earned him jobs around the world, and he co-wrote a bestseller, *Crazy Sexy Kitchen*. While developing a healthy eating program for Whole Foods Market, Sarno discovered that many people didn't understand food-preparation basics, like how to cook grains or heat a sauté pan properly. The discovery made him rethink his teaching approach, which had been more focused on complicated flavor profiles.

It's a lesson Sarno has also applied to his latest gig, developing plant-based cooking courses for Rouxbe Cooking School. While his online classes cover advanced techniques like making pasta from scratch, some of the “aha” moments for students have been simple things such as how to use a knife properly or sweat garlic for optimum flavor. More than 900 people—including physicians, executive chefs and home cooks—have enrolled since the program began in early 2014. Now Sarno is developing courses tailored for people with diabetes, autoimmune disease and other illnesses. “We are arming people with the tools they need to control their health” in the kitchen, he says.

VANILLA FRENCH TOAST*

SERVES 4

INGREDIENTS

BATTER:

1 vanilla bean, scraped
2 cups nondairy milk
⅓ cup cashew butter
¼ cup maple syrup
2 tablespoons egg replacer or corn starch
½ tablespoon cinnamon
½ teaspoon freshly grated nutmeg
Pinch of sea salt

TOAST:

Fresh rustic (or whole grain) bread,
1-inch thick slices
Margarine
Optional toppings: fresh berries, peaches,
maple syrup, cashew cream

DIRECTIONS

- 1 Combine batter ingredients in blender until smooth. Set aside.
- 2 Place sliced bread in batter and soak for 1 minute.
- 3 On a flat pan, grill or large fry pan, add 1 tablespoon of butter and melt. Add soaked bread and grill on medium heat for 3 to 4 minutes. Flip slices and cook until lightly golden.
- 4 Serve with desired toppings.

*Recipe courtesy of Rouxbe Cooking School, rouxbe.com/plant-based.

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